

Building Codes in Effect for South Carolina

Every city and county in South Carolina that does not legally “Opt out” of the Code Enforcement Program, must enforce the mandatory building codes referenced in [Section 6-9-50](#) of the South Carolina Code of Laws, 1976 as Amended (SC Code), after they are reviewed and adopted by the Building Codes Council (Council). Local jurisdictions are restricted from promulgating their own building codes, in whole or in part or adopting and enforcing building codes other than those referenced in Section 6- 9-50 of the SC Code. Unless modified by the Council, all chapters (except the Administrative Chapter) of all codes must be enforced in their entirety.

Only the mandatory building codes listed below may be adopted by the Council and enforced at the local level. Any code used to regulate the construction or alteration of buildings or structures, including their systems or components, not listed below are not valid and cannot be legally promulgated, adopted or enforced by a local jurisdiction.

On May 26, 2004, the Council updated the mandatory and permissive building codes to be used within South Carolina. The Council established the implementation date for local jurisdictions as January 1, 2005 for all codes, with the exception of the International Residential Code and the International Fuel Gas Code. The implementation date established for the International Residential and Fuel Gas Codes was July 1, 2005. All local jurisdictions must enforce the mandatory codes, and may adopt and enforce the permissive codes at any time after the implementation of the mandatory codes.

Mandatory Building Codes adopted for current use in South Carolina and which must be enforced by local jurisdictions include the:

- 2003 International Building Code with SC modifications;
- 2003 International Fire Code with SC modifications;
- 2003 International Plumbing Code;
- 2003 International Mechanical Code;
- 2003 International Energy Conservation Code;
- 2003 International Residential Code with SC modifications;
- 2003 International Fuel Gas Code with SC modifications; and,
- 2005 National Electrical Code.

The 1998 ICC/ANSI A117.1, Accessible and Useable Buildings and Facilities, is adopted by the [Accessibility Act](#) and mandatory for use in all jurisdictions within the state (see NOTE below).

The Building [Energy Efficiency Standards Act](#) is adopted by statute and mandatory for use in all jurisdictions within the state.

The codes are to be used in conjunction with the latest [code modifications](#) authorized by the Council. Only the modifications authorized and listed on this website are valid for use in the state. Building code modifications that have not received prior approval by the Council are invalid and cannot be adopted, employed or enforced by local jurisdictions.

As permitted by Section 6-9-60 of the SC Code, “permissive codes” may be used as needed by a local jurisdiction, but the codes must first be adopted by ordinance before enforcement can begin. The permissive codes are the:

- 2003 International Property Maintenance Code;
- 2003 International Existing Building Code; and,
- 2003 International Performance Code for Buildings and Facilities.

Adoption of the mandatory and permissive codes does not include the chapters, sections or provisions addressing administrative policies or procedures. Administrative policies and procedures are the sole responsibility of each local jurisdiction. If the governing body of a local jurisdiction desires to use the administrative provisions in one or more of the adopted building codes, it must first adopt the chapters or sections by ordinance. In lieu of adopting the administrative provisions contained in the adopted building codes, the governing body of a local jurisdiction may develop specific administrative policies and procedures for the operation of its Building Inspection Department. If administrative policies and procedures are developed at the local level, they must be adopted by ordinance before they can take effect.

Appendixes to the mandatory codes may not be used at the local level unless specifically adopted by the Building Codes Council.

NOTE - Although other standards for building accessibility exist, the 1998 Edition of the ICC/ANSI A117.1, Accessible and Useable Buildings and Facilities, is the only accessibility document required by state law to be enforced by the local building officials. All plan reviews and inspections conducted by local Building Inspection Departments, therefore, will be based on ICC/ANSI A117.1. It is important to note, however, that other accessibility documents are also law and cannot be ignored. Legal action can be taken against a building owner, manager or any person involved in design or construction/renovation of a building or structure requiring accessibility, under any of the accessibility laws. Therefore, before construction or renovation of a building or structure that requires accessibility, all applicable accessibility laws should be considered.

Additional accessibility laws that must be considered, and the enforcement entities include the:
[Americans With Disabilities Act](#) (ADA), published and enforced by the US Department of Justice (DOJ);
[Fair Housing Act Amendments](#) of 1988, published and enforced by the US Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD); and,
South Carolina [Fair Housing Law](#), published and enforced by the SC Human Affairs Commission.

[Order copies](#) of the International Codes, the National Electrical Code or the ICC/ANSI A117.1 document.

Jurisdictions that have legally opted out of the code enforcement program at this time include the:

- Town of Troy; and,
- County of Union.

Code Adoption History:

The following information is provided for research purposes and may be used to verify the official dates for which local jurisdictions were or are required to enforce certain editions of the mandatory building codes.

The International Code Series was developed as a joint project by the Southern Building Code Congress, International, the International Conference of Building Officials and the Building Officials and Code Administrators, International (referred to as model code organizations) and replaced the Standard, National and Uniform Building Code Series. The 1997 Editions of the Standard, National and Uniform Codes (which were regional), and the 1995 Edition of the CABO One and Two Family Dwelling Code (which was national) were the last to be published. The International Building Code Series replaced those documents and provided a single set of National Codes. Simultaneously, the three model code organizations merged and created the International Code Council. All codes training and Code Enforcement Officer certification examinations for the State of South Carolina are now based on the International Code series.

Prior to June 13, 1997, local jurisdictions that desired to adopt building codes were permitted to do so by local ordinance. If a jurisdiction did adopt building codes, it was required to adopt only the codes authorized by the Building Codes Act. Once adopted, the jurisdiction was obligated to continue adoption of each new edition within one year after it was made available by the publisher. The implementation date for enforcement was established by the local jurisdiction.

Starting July 13, 1997, all local jurisdictions that did not legally “opt out” of the mandatory building code program were required to adopt building codes by local ordinance, after they were authorized by the Council. The Council was also required to establish the date of implementation for each of the adopted codes.

Starting July 2, 2003, the council was charged with the responsibility for adopting all mandatory building codes and establishing the date of implementation for the local jurisdictions.

Starting with the 2006 Code adoption cycle, local jurisdictions no longer adopt appendices

Building codes authorized or adopted by the Building Codes Council, and their corresponding implementation dates, starting with the current codes and going back to the 2000 International Code Series include the following.

Codes Adopted	Adoption Date	Implementation Date
2006 International Building Code	November 28, 2007	July 1, 2008
2006 International Fire Code	November 28, 2007	July 1, 2008
2006 International Plumbing Code	November 28, 2007	July 1, 2008
2006 International Mechanical Code	November 28, 2007	July 1, 2008
2006 International Fuel Gas Code	November 28, 2007	July 1, 2008
2006 International Energy Conservation Code	November 28, 2007	July 1, 2008
2006 International Residential Code	November 28, 2007	July 1, 2008

2005 National Electrical Code	February 22, 2006	July 1, 2007
2003 International Residential Code	May 26, 2004	July 1, 2005
2003 International Fuel Gas Code	May 26, 2004	July 1, 2005
2003 International Building Code	May 26, 2004	January 1, 2005
2003 International Fire Code	May 26, 2004	January 1, 2005
2003 International Plumbing Code	May 26, 2004	January 1, 2005
2003 International Mechanical Code	May 26, 2004	January 1, 2005
2003 International Energy Conservation Code	May 26, 2004	January 1, 2005

Codes Authorized	Authorization Date	Implementation Date
2002 National Electrical Code 2003*	May 22, 2002	July 1, 2002 to July 1,
2000 International Residential Code	May 24, 2000	July 1, 2002
2000 International Energy Conservation Code	May 24, 2000	July 1, 2001
2000 International Building Code	May 24, 2000	July 1, 2001
2000 International Fire Code	May 24, 2000	July 1, 2001
2000 International Plumbing Code	May 24, 2000	July 1, 2001
2000 International Mechanical Code	May 24, 2000	July 1, 2001
2000 International Fuel Gas Code	May 24, 2000	July 1, 2001

*** NOTE!**

The 2002 National Electrical Code was adopted during the time period when local jurisdictions were allowed one year to implement the codes by local ordinance.